

Notes from Bonatti “On War” with Reference to B. Brady and L. Lehman

Basic Approach

1. Assign the 1st, L1, and the planet the Moon last separated from to the “away”¹ team
2. Assign the 7th, L7, and the planet the Moon is applying to, to the “home” team
3. Judge their strengths and weaknesses; the stronger of the two indicates the winner of the battle/contest

A Note on Aspects

Bonatti talks about planets *joining*; what he means by this is explained by Robert Hand in the *Third Tractatus* of Bonatti's *Liber Astronomiae* translated by Robert Zoller, *Spica Publications 1998*, p.103:

“[O]nly those aspects are valid that are 1) within orbs, 2) applying and 3) that are the very next exact aspect that both of the planets are going to form within the signs they are in... 'Joining' seems to be seen as something that is *done to* the planet which makes the application”

Bonatti's orbs are for the planets, not the aspects. Two planets are seen to enter into an aspect when they are within 1/2 the degrees combined orbs of each (*moiety*). The orbs are:

♄, ♀ 9° ♂ 8° ♃, ♀ 7° ☉ 15° ☿ 12°

As an example, the ☉ and ♂ would enter into a ♂ when the ☉, moving towards ♂, was within $(15 + 8)/2 = 11^{\circ} 30'$ of ♂.

Basic Conditions that Aid a Planet

According to Bonatti, these are the basic conditions that help make a planet strong and fortunate²:

- *, Δ, □ or ♀ a good planet, especially with reception; this even makes malefics fortunate
- ♂ or ♄ cadent from a planet (and so neither *, Δ, □ or ♀) is a fortunate condition
- separating from one fortunate planet applying to another fortunate planet
- between two fortunate planets or the rays of two fortunate planets
- *, Δ the ☉ or the ☿ if she is fortunate
- in the houses or signs where they rejoice

♄ 12th ♁
♀ 11th ✎
♂ 6th ♀
☉ 9th

♀ 5th ♂
♂ 1st ♀
☿ 3rd

¹ Bonatti gives it to the *challenger*, the person starting the war, battle or contest. In baseball, Lee Lehman gives it to the home team as their pitcher throws the first pitch to start the game; however, the pitcher cannot throw the pitch until a batter steps into the box and sets, ready for the pitch, so technically, I believe the away team starts the game. Also, the away team must travel to the home team's field, if he doesn't show up there is no game.

² Bonatti also makes use of dark, smokey, etc. Degrees; I have never used them so did not include them here

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- in an angular or succedent house
- direct, fast, increasing in light³
- in their own sect positions
 - a masculine planet in a masculine sign, on the same side of the horizon as the ☉, in a masculine quarter
 - a feminine planet in a feminine sign, on the side of the horizon opposite from the ☉, in a feminine quarter
 - a planet meeting all their sect conditions is in *hayz* (a very fortunate condition)
- ☿, ♈ or ☊ oriental (rising before the ☉)
- ♎, ♏, or ♑ occidental (rising after the ☉)
- ♎ in the exaltation (♊) of the ☉

Basic Conditions that Harm a Planet

According to Bonatti, these are the basic conditions that help make a planet debilitated and unfortunate:

- conjunct or in aspect of ☿ or ☊ without reception if the conjunction or ray falls within the same bounds the planet occupies⁴
- in the bounds of a malefic
- in the domicile of a malefic without reception and even worse if the malefic is overcoming them (elevated above in the 10th or 11th from them); if there is reception the malice is reduced
- combust by conjunction (based on *moiety*) or combust by opposition⁵ or Under the Sun's Beams (USB, within 15° of the ☉)
- square the ☉ without reception
- being within the 12° before the ♋ or ♏ node or within the 10° after the ♋ or ♏ node⁶
- besieged by malefics or their rays⁷

3 Moving away from the ☉ towards its opposition

4 Not confident of my reading here, I've interpreted it as the malefic or its rays needing to fall within the bounds occupied by the other planet but the examples Bonatti give could indicate they are within the *number* of degrees the bound takes up in the sign “*between the planet and the malefic or its rays, less than what the bound of that planet may be, just as if Jupiter were to be in Aries and Saturn or his rays were to be near him by less than six degrees, which are the bound of Jupiter in Aries, or as if Venus were to be there and Saturn or his rays were to be near to her by less than eight degrees, which are the bound of Venus in Aries, or as if Mercury were to be there, and there were between him and Saturn or his rays less than seven degrees, which are the third bound of Aries, namely of Mercury*” (p161) although that doesn't make much sense to me; it would be like using varying planet orbs according to the sign occupied. His reference to Mercury as holding the third set of bounds in Aries does make me think its the bound degrees actually occupied rather than separation by the number of bound degrees they hold in the sign.

5 Schmidt calls this condition “*curtailed passage*”. It occurs when a planet is within 7° 30' of an exact opposition

6 Zoller says this condition is called *Zenzahar*

7 A planet can be *besieged* bodily i.e. ♏ is besieged at 7♊ if ☿ 5♊ and ☊ 9♊ no other planet or ray is between 5-9♊. If the malefics don't actually occupy those degrees but one of their aspects fall there the besiegement is by *rays*.

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- retrograde
- cadent from the Ascendant or their own domiciles
- slow or in its first station (about to turn retrograde) or not in any of its sect positions
- in opposition to their own domiciles (detriment) or exaltation (fall)
- superior planets occidental of the ☉ in feminine quarters
- inferior planets oriental of the ☉ in masculine quarters
- the ☉ is also weakened in feminine quarters unless he's in the 9th ⁸ or if he is in ♌ (his Fall), regardless of which quarter he is in
- the ♀ is also weakened if she is in the *via combusta*⁹ or in ♈ without being received by ☿

A Note on Reception from Brady¹⁰

A *retrograde* or *cadent* planet, being received, cannot accept what is offered and must return it to the giver. If the giver is retrograde or cadent the returned gift becomes a burden to him. Reception is by domicile, exaltation or *both* triplicity and term, as well,

“a benefic in rulership or exaltation greatly aids the party it signifies but a malefic in rulership or exaltation greatly hinders the party it signifies. In contrast to this, a benefic in detriment or fall hinders the party it signifies but a malefic in detriment or fall greatly benefits the party it signifies”

Selecting and Weighing the Significators

A number of factors determine the strength of a signicator:

- ♄, ♀ and ☿ (the superior planets) are naturally stronger than the ☉, ☿, ♀, or ♀ (the inferior planets)¹¹
- L1 being one of ♄, ♀ and ☿, free from combustion¹², in the 1st, 10th, or received in the 4th (if the receiving planet is not L7 or L8¹³) the away team “*will obtain against his enemy*”
- L7 being one of ♄, ♀ and ☿, free from combustion, in the 7th, 4th, or received in the 10th (if the receiving planet is not L1 or L2) then the home team is the stronger and will win out
- If the signicator is one of ♄, ♀ and ☿, cadent, he is still likely to be stronger than an inferior, signicator unless the inferior planet is fortified by an angular planet that receives him¹⁴

⁸ In natiivities, this may not apply if the chart is a woman's

⁹ 15 ♌ to 15 ♍; more specifically 19 ♊ (☉'s Fall) to 3 ♎ (☿'s Fall)

¹⁰ [*Charts of Conflicts and Battles*](#) by Bernadette Brady

¹¹ The planets are grouped as “heavy weights” or “light weights”, with the *superior* planets (♄ ♀ ☿) being *heavy* and the *inferior* planets (☉ ☿ ♀ ♀) being *light*.

¹² *Combustion* is usually seen as within 8° 30' of the ☉. The signicator should not be within that range or *about* to move within that range.

¹³ Zoller adds a footnote indicating Bonatti may have been unsure about the receiving planet, if it was L7 or L8, it would be enough to take down L1 as the 1st and 10th are naturally stronger than the 7th and 4th.

¹⁴ Brady points out that as the 1st and 7th are in opposition battles are usually between: ☿-♀ (♊/♍ ♌/♏) or ♀-♀ (♋/♏ ♈/♏) or ♄-☉ (♈/♏) or ♄-☉ (♈/♏).

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- If the significator is angular but in the aspect of a cadent planet, he will stronger than the debility the other planet is causing until that planet moves into the same angle or moves away by at least 15°; however, if the two conjunct, the significator will be completely undone
- if a significator is not in the aspect of any planet in the sign he is in, see which planet he will first be in aspect to in the next sign he enters, the conditions under which they meet affect his strength
 - strengthened if he joins with
 - a superior planet, in an angle or succedent house, by * or Δ with reception
 - a benefic by * or Δ w/o reception or by □ or ♀ with reception
 - weakened/destroyed if he joins with
 - any planet by □ or ♀ w/o reception
 - a malefic combust or in a cadent house
- a significator in the other significator's house is a great debility and even more so if that planet aspects it in that house i.e. ☿ rising, ♀ on the 7th, ☿ in the 1st in the square of ♀ the challenger won but if the lord of the house does not aspect him he will escape (he will also escape if he is the other's 12th or retrograde)
- L1 in the 8th or ♀ L8 it makes the challenger uncertain; same for L7 in the 2nd and more so if L8 or L2 are impeded by another planet with mutual reception, less so if only one receives
- L1 in the 10th joined to L10 is stronger than his opponent and is made even stronger if the heavier of L1 and L10 is in the 1st, 10th, 11th, or 2nd as then the challenger will not be conquered¹⁵
- L7 in the 4th joined to L4 is stronger than the challenger and more so if the heavier of L7 and L4 is in the 4th, 7th, 8th or 5th
- a significator joined to an angular planet or the lord of an angle is fortified, even more so if he himself is in an angle
- a significator aspecting the house he rules is strengthened
- a malefic in, □ or ♀ the 1st (or 7th) and not ruling the 1st (or 7th) by domicile or exaltation indicates the team will not execute things properly unless there is also a benefic in the house or a benefic is Δ the malefic
- a malefic in, □ or ♀ the 2nd (or 8th) and not ruling the 2nd (or 8th) by domicile or exaltation indicates things will go wrong for the team (unlucky bounces, errors, etc?) unless there is also a benefic in the house or a benefic is Δ the malefic
- if L10 is in the 1st authorities aid the away team; if he's in the 7th, authorities aid the home team. The same if one of the lights is joined to L1 or L7 (if they themselves are not L1 or L7)
- ☽ separating from one significator and joining the other is a great debility for the significator she is leaving

¹⁵ This is only so if the challenger is playing at the opponent's home field. If they are playing elsewhere the challenger will likely win but may also lose because of his own actions or supporters

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General Comments

- ♄ in an angle makes for a hard, prolonged battle, more so if he is retrograde; same for ♀ only he doesn't prolong it
- if ♀ is the significator he indicates those who will not give up; especially if ♀ is in his 2nd station. If he is also retrograde the team will be unstable and will not persevere
- A good inferior planet is better than an impeded superior planet
- If both significators are direct the game will proceed on congenial terms
- If both are retrograde, both teams will be out to deceive each other
- If one is direct, the other retrograde, the retrograde significator will use cunning and attempt to deceive the other. His house position relative to the direct planet will indicate the means by which the deception will be contrived
- ♀, if not L1 or L7, by his condition, indicates the strength of the battle. Connected with the 8th, injuries
- ♃ in the 4th, 6th, or 10th indicates capture or wounds for the away team
- ♃ separated from ♀ by body and joined to ♄ by ♄ or ♀ especially in the 2nd indicates the home team will lose, more so if she is with the nodes
- ♃ angular aspecting the lord of the house and he is angular, small war; in succedent or angular house or in ♄ or ♃, moderate war; in a cadent house, lord cadent, a multitude of conflicts and the same if she is in ♌ or ♍ or the last half of ♎
- ☉ ♃ fortified in the Eastern half or the Western half of the chart indicate which side wins; if they are weak and unfortunate, they indicate the losing side

Timing

- L1 & L7 separating from each other means the contest will last longer than usual